

Cedar River Instream Flow Commission

Final Minutes

SPU Water Quality Lab

July 2nd, 2014

Organizations/Members Present:

- Seattle Public Utilities -- Tom Fox, Rand Little, Karl Burton
- Seattle City Light -- Liz Ablow
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife -- Peggy Miller
- NOAA Fisheries -- Randy McIntosh
- Army Corps of Engineers -- Larry Schick, Ken Brettmann
- Washington Department of Ecology -- Buck Smith, Toni Smith
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Tim Romanski

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- I. Call to Order:** Tom called the meeting to order at 9:45 AM.
- II. Approval of Agenda:** Approved as presented.
- III. Approval of Draft Minutes:** Approved as presented.
- IV. News and Notes:** Tom announced that he would be retiring this month. He told the IFC that he has enjoyed and appreciated working them. Buck reported that Jackie Klug, the Regional Water Resources Section Manager for Dept. of Ecology, had her last day at the agency last week. She now works for King County. Randy asked Tom whether the HCP Oversight Climate Change Subcommittee would complete and distribute their findings before he retires. Tom responded that the report would not be completed by then because there is still work to confirm that the models can successfully predict historic data. Currently, the model results predict cooler than actual temperatures during the winter and that needs to be corrected. Tom said that the models do suggest that temperatures will increase with the result being less snow in the winter. Future precipitation patterns in the mountains will be dominated by rainfall and this will have implications for water supply. Buck asked whether the IFC could get periodic updates on the progress of the Climate Change Subcommittee and Rand responded that there are minutes available on the City Website and offered to distribute to the IFC the two draft climate change issue papers discussed during the previous day's HCP Oversight Committee meeting. Buck requested that Seattle provide the IFC members with an alert e-mail when the website has been updated. Tom mentioned that SPU is implementing a

reorganization process. Randy asked Tom whether his replacement would have to have a Professional Engineers License and Tom said a PE had been required in the past but he wasn't sure if that would be the case moving forward. Paul Faulds will be the acting water manager until the process to fill Tom's position permanently has been completed.

Buck presented a letter to Tom Fox from the Department of Ecology acknowledging Tom's excellent work on behalf of water resources and expressing appreciation for his many years of service to the region.

V. Real Time Water Management:

Hydrologic Conditions: Tom reported that recent warm weather has caused a slight snowmelt signal for Chester Morse inflows but the remaining snow is pretty much melted at this point. Precipitation for June was below average. Chester Morse Reservoir is full at this time but will begin to draw down soon. Inflows are dropping close to the 50 percentile level and that will likely continue to drop to the 10 percentile by the end of July. SPU has, so far, successfully provided the supplemental blocks to meet or exceed the allocation plan approved in June. Actual flows have been lower than estimated unregulated flows over the last month while SPU filled and maintained the full reservoir. There was a slight downramping event at Landsburg in mid-June that exceeded 1" per hour by 0.08" for one hour. However, this was not a violation because it occurred during forebay cleaning, an operation that is given an exemption from the downramping regulations. Forebay cleaning went well with very few Chinook juveniles captured and most coho juveniles returning to the river unhandled via the drain pipe under the fishway. Demand climbed to 176 MGD yesterday due to the hot weather.

Lake Washington and Weather: Ken reported that Lake Washington has been full for 2 weeks and is currently at an elevation of 21.75'. The lake elevation is decreasing because the water needs for lock operations, in addition to evaporation, have exceeded the volume of inflows. The Corps intends to run the flumes for as long as possible. Currently the two largest flumes (260 cfs combined) are operating and Ken said he expects that to continue well into July. As we move into August, the Corps will scale back to use the 2 smaller flumes or one large flume to conserve water and extend the time that fish have to use the flumes. The Corps is currently replacing the 6 spill gates at the locks and they expect the work to be complete by the end of the summer. They also intend to continue experimenting with false lockages to encourage cool salt water to enter the forebay, which is intended to provide better temperature conditions for fish. The Corps has numerous salinity sensors between the locks and Montlake Cut to record the salinity changes and to make sure they don't exceed the 1 part per thousand threshold as measured at Montlake. Results from the experiment are expected in October.

Larry commented on the recent hot weather with a high of 94 degrees measured at SeaTac yesterday. Today the weather is dry but much cooler than yesterday and the next few days are expected to be in the 70's. Next week is also supposed to be dry. The extended forecast calls for a warmer than normal summer and a dryer and warmer than normal fall. The El Nino signal is getting stronger but is still considered moderate. El Nino winters are usually characterized by warmer than normal temperatures because of the lower probability of arctic intrusions of cold air into the Pacific Northwest.

Fish Update: The sockeye run is the lowest on record for today's date. Recently the numbers have gone up to a thousand fish a day but that is still way below normal. Typically, peak counts at the locks occur in the 1st or 2nd week of July. The Muckleshoot biologists reported that early migrants have been sampled and 98% of fish sampled have been 5 year olds. The 2010 cohort (4 year olds) did experience a large flow event that likely caused high mortality but there was still over 4 million natural outmigrants to the lake and an additional 8 million hatchery sockeye released. The Baker Lake run also appears to be low this year but the Columbia sockeye seem to be doing OK in comparison.

Army Corps Challenge Grant Discussion: Rand passed out the current draft letter to the Corps outlining the IFC intention to provide \$100,000 for the design work for the Stoney Gate Valve Replacement Project and to work with the Corps to support the completion of the project. When the IFC approves and signs the letter, they will officially approve the allocation of the funds. The IFC all supported the letter as written. Buck asked Rand to send him an e-mail explaining the source of the funding. The present proposal is for the lead IFC representative for each agency to sign the letter to the Corps at the next meeting.

VI. Supplemental Studies:

Karl briefly reviewed the plan for retrieving the accelerometers during the first three weeks in August. Rand reported that he and Karl with complete the second half of this year's off-channel habitat inventory next week.

VII. August 6th IFC Meeting:

- 1) Signing of letter to the Corps
- 2) Coordination with Oversight Committee on impacts of climate change on water temperature.

Meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM